

REMARKS

In the Official Action mailed on April 22, 2004, the Examiner allowed claims 1-8, 12, 13, 20-30, 34, 35, 37, 40, and 42-45. Furthermore, the Examiner indicated that claims 9-11, 14, 16-19, 31-33, 36, 38, 39, and 41 should be cancelled to place the case in condition for allowance, since these claims are directed to a non-elected species. However, because independent claims 1, 5, 23, and 27 were indicated as being allowable, Applicants respectfully submit that all previously withdrawn claims depending therefrom should be allowable unless they contain subject matter that is inconsistent with the subject matter set forth in the independent claims.

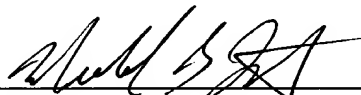
In telephonic interviews between Examiner Nguyen and the undersigned on June 15 and 16, 2004, the Examiner and the undersigned generally agreed that the previously withdrawn claims should be allowable to the extent that they did not contain subject matter inconsistent with the independent claims. In this regard, Applicants respectfully submit that original claims 9-11 properly depend from and are not inconsistent with the subject matter set forth in independent claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 9-11. Furthermore, because claims 15-19 now depend from independent claim 5, and are not inconsistent with the subject matter set forth in independent claim 5, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 15-19 are also in condition for allowance. Because the subject matter set forth in original claims 31-33 is not inconsistent with the subject matter set forth in allowed independent claim 23, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 31-33 are also in condition for allowance. Finally, because claims 38, 39, and 41 now depend from independent claim 27, and contain subject matter that is not inconsistent with independent claim 27, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 38, 39, and 41 are also in condition for allowance. Claims 14 and 36 have been cancelled.

In conclusion, because (1) certain claims were originally withdrawn as being directed to a non-elected species, (2) all independent claims have been indicated as being allowable, and (3) the subject matter of the previous withdrawn claims is not inconsistent with the subject matter set forth in the allowed independent claims, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-13, 15-35, and 37-45 are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner favorably consider Applicants' remarks, enter the present amendments, and pass the application to allowance with claims 1-13, 15-35, and 37-45.

If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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